

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A lower-bit replacement means of an information addition means replaces lower 3 bits of an 8-bit image signal with 3 bits of an image area separation signal,
5 and outputs an 8-bit conversion image signal. A lower-bit extraction means of an information extraction means extracts lower 3 bits of the 8-bit conversion image signal and outputs an image area separation signal as additional information. On the other hand, as regards
10 image information, the conversion image signal input to the information extraction means is output as it is, as an image signal.